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Author

Smith, Donald B.

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would never dream of stepping out of literature to write for publication on chemistry or Chinese grammar feel perfectly comfortable day-tripping through Native American studies, as if there were no established discipline there.

I shuddered every time he used "Huron," an archaic French slur term meaning "pig-haired lout," not "Wyandot." Beyond words, Griffin mixed and matched elements of utterly unrelated Native cultures, an approach impatiently eschewed by scholars in Native studies and one that has not been respectable in Euro-dominated ethnology for at least twenty years.

Worse, instead of acknowledging that superficial similarities between Iroquoian and European spirituality were accidental, not revealing, Griffin intellectualized Native meanings in terms of European values and images in a damaging process I have elsewhere dubbed "Euro-forming the Data" (*Debating Democracy*, Clear Light, 1998). Iroquoian imagistic content is simply not comparable to Christian revelatory mythology.

Yes, comparisons of Chiokoyhikoy's vision to European sources *were* appropriate, but *not* because "visions" transcend culture. It was because the *Apocalypse* was never authentically Iroquoian in the first place. It was always the European product of a French mind working from a Christian base. The broad use to which birds, serpents, water, etc., were put in the *Apocalypse* showed only that the author was vaguely aware of such figures of Iroquoian speech, not that his use of them was invested with genuine Native meaning. As Grinde conceded (after wasting several pages on the matter himself), the value of *Apocalypse* lay "not in ethnological 'correctness'" (p. 204).

On the contrary, the value of the *Apocalypse* is in its window onto a uniquely French view of colonial politics circa 1777. Its hilarious satire of the parrot-sophes and mesmerizers of the Parisian salons was, alone, worth the reading time, but its unequivocal articulation of what invasion meant for Natives—Euro-visited death and destruction—is what merited special scrutiny. It bespoke a consciousness of European culpability for genocide that I found more telling than any pseudo-Indianness in Chikoyhikoy's vision.

Barbara A. Mann

University of Toledo

Dissonant Worlds, Roger Vandersteene Among the Cree. By Earle H. Waugh. Waterloo, Ontario, Canada: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1996. 344 pages. \$24.95 paper.

Dissonant Worlds reviews the life and ideas of Roger Vandersteene (1918-1976) a Flemish missionary among the Cree in sub-Arctic Canada. From 1946 to his death in 1976 the Oblate priest sought to unite Cree tradition and Roman Catholicism. To describe Vandersteene's vision, his attempt to create a church "fashioned out of Cree tradition rather than adding a little Cree tradition to Christianity" (p. 4), biographer Earle Waugh uses the word *interstitial*. Professor of the history of religions at the University of Alberta and author of

Native Religious Traditions and the Munshidin of Egypt: Their World and Their Song, he calls the religion interstitial, "because, in some sense, it operates in a domain beyond previous conceptions of either Christian or Cree traditions, yet depends upon them" (p. 3).

Father Vandersteene's life had a tragic, unfulfilled quality. As Professor Waugh explains, he did not live to see his goals achieved. He acquired an incredible knowledge of the Cree language and died a Cree medicine man, yet as Waugh explains, he did not witness the birth of a Cree church. Although the dedicated missionary himself reached an "interstitial" state, no Roman Catholic church that was properly Cree emerged. Shortly before his death he would give his medicine pipe to Harold Cardinal, a Cree friend, who had left the Roman Catholic Church (p. 313).

While the research behind the book is impressive, the presentation of the findings is not. A number of poorly written sections, an overabundance of detail, and a failure to develop fully the interstitial concept make *Dissonant Worlds* a frustrating read. The author hesitates to etch finely his portrait of the fiery five-foot-tall Steentje, or Rock, as his boyhood friends called him. One puts down the book with the central question left unanswered—was Vandersteene an incurable romantic? Or did he advance a practical plan to construct a new religious reality, a spiritually strong Cree Roman Catholicism?

Professor Waugh never met his subject, but spent thirteen years collecting information about him. In Northern Alberta and in Belgium he interviewed more than eighty individuals: Cree and Métis, personal acquaintances, family members, priests and sisters. He also studied Vandersteene's poetry and paintings in an attempt to understand him. The first two chapters of the study review this Belgian background.

Vandersteene, the first of thirteen children, was born in the last months of the First World War, in a small village in Flemish Belgium. His parents ran a small gardening business. Even though ill health plagued him throughout his youth, Roger did very well at school. Against her husband's wishes, his deeply religious mother encouraged her son to become a priest. He entered the Flemish Oblate's seminary at the age of nineteen where in September 1942 he decided to become an overseas missionary.

Steentje had a second love, in addition to his church, a deep attachment to his Flemish people. He grew up in a Belgium dominated by the Walloon, the French-speaking community. From an early age he became a dedicated Flemish nationalist, one determined to end his people's second-class status in their own country. His pro-Flemish politics placed him in the pro-German camp. During World War Two he apparently shared, or was at least sympathetic to, the viewpoint of those Flemish nationalists who worked for the creation of a separate state for the Flemish-speaking parts of Belgium in a new European order under Hitler and the Nazis. Was Vandersteene in his youth a naive romantic nationalist? The author reports, but does not comment.

The young priest's political views made it difficult for him to remain in Belgium in 1945. In the final months of the war Vandersteene had become known among Belgian anti-collaborationists as the "Priest with the Black Heart" (p. 33). After the war ended in May 1945 the Flemish patriot actively

protected Flemish nationalists now accused of collaboration during the German occupation. The young priest appeared in court on behalf of friends accused of collaboration. On one occasion he carried fifteen false passports for them. Once he dressed a woman up as a priest to get her through anti-collaborationist lines (p. 34). His posting to the mission field of Northern Alberta in December 1945 spirited him away from the growing controversy about his support of those accused of collaboration.

Professor Waugh's three chapters on Vandersteene's life in northern Canada contain fascinating information about the Cree and the Roman Catholic missionary's gradual discovery of their worldview. The author explains the traditional Peace River Crees' belief in the existence of thunderbirds who provided rain, growth, and fertility (p. 47). One learns of the non-human spirit helpers, usually in the form of animals, whose existence freed individuals from relying on their parents or other humans (p. 57). He describes the medicine men's shaking tent rite, practiced today, the author adds, even in the city of Edmonton (p. 60).

Language was the key to Vandersteene's discovery of Cree culture. In the priest's own words: "A Fleming understands better than anybody that the language of a people is its main artery" (p. 90). A number of Cree called him *Ka Nihta Nehiyawet*, which translates into English as "the one who really speaks Cree" (p. 92).

The young priest preferred to stay in isolated Cree communities, where the population hunted, fished, and trapped. The elders gradually convinced him that traditional Cree beliefs should be preserved. After a decade in northern Alberta he began to synthesize Cree and Christian tradition. In the early 1960s Vatican II allowed for these changes, as the church took a more flexible view to special modification of Roman Catholic ritual for different cultural communities. Vandersteene introduced Cree tunes and Cree drumming (p. 136). He himself attended Cree traditional celebrations (p. 142). In the late 1950s Jean-Baptiste Sewepagahan gave him his medicine pipe and bundle which had been ritually passed to him by his father.

The gift made the Roman Catholic missionary a Cree elder and a medicine man as well (p. 145), but when he finally formulated his strategy for a Cree church he had few Native followers. Many of his fellow missionaries found his ideas incomprehensible (p. 165). The book's final chapters reveal Vandersteene's despair as he realized in the late 1960s and early 1970s that his efforts to promote a Cree church had failed.

The final half of the book contains a wealth of information about its subject but has no real shape. Chapter six on Vandersteene's art is very difficult to follow, and chapter seven on his poetry is not really integrated with the more biographical first five chapters. Even more serious is the author's failure in his final three chapters to evaluate fully Vandersteene's proposals for the Cree. He underscores, for example, the criticisms of Father Arthur Lamothe, a Métis who felt that the Flemish priest's version of the Cree as hunters and trappers was wishful thinking (pp. 233-234). They were migrating in large numbers to the city and wanted to participate in the larger Canadian community.

Students of Aboriginal Canada will find this book of great interest, as few

in-depth treatments of twentieth-century Canadian Christian missionaries currently exist. It is incredibly difficult, however, to read due to an awkward writing style and a reluctance by the biographer to probe deeply into his subject's character. *Dissonant Worlds* succeeds as a source book on the life of a Christian missionary who recognized the value of Aboriginal culture and worked to preserve it, but not as a biography.

Donald B. Smith

University of Calgary

Early Native American Writing. Edited by Helen Jaskoski. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996. 238 pages. \$64.95 cloth; \$19.95 paper.

In *Other Destinies* (1992), his study of the American Indian novel, Louis Owens states, "More than any other particular segment of American literature, like the peoples who have produced it, Native American literature—whether materials from oral tradition or works by contemporary authors—has been routinely marginalized" (p. 16). Owens is right, of course. But his statement itself marginalizes another category of American Indian literature—early literature written in English. *Early Native American Writing: New Critical Essays*, edited by Helen Jaskoski, focuses its attention on this doubly marginalized literature and seeks to strengthen our understanding of the American Indian literary tradition.

The anthology groups nearly three hundred years of American Indian writing under the rubric "Early." Beginning with Wolfgang Hochbruck's and Beatrix Dudensing-Reichel's examination of writing produced by Indian students at Harvard University in the 1660s and 1670s, the collection progresses chronologically through Birgit Hans' analysis of the revision and evolution of D'Arcy McNickle's 1934 novel, *The Surrounded*. In some ways, grouping together such vastly different texts as "early" creates a chronological category too broad to be critically useful. The writing of D'Arcy McNickle, for example, does not have nearly as much in common—structurally or thematically—with Samson Occom's *Short Narrative* (discussed in Dana Nelson's contribution to the volume) as it does with contemporary writer N. Scott Momaday's prose. As Birgit Hans claims in her excellent essay on *The Surrounded*, McNickle's novel "anticipated the novels of the American Indian Renaissance thirty years later" (p. 238).

Hans' reference to an "American Indian Renaissance" is only one indicator of the manner in which Kenneth Lincoln's influential study, *Native American Renaissance* (1983) has shaped the periodization of American Indian literature. "Early," in Jaskoski's volume, means pre-"Renaissance" or pre-1960s, though ironically, as Arnold Krupat and other have argued, the term *renaissance* is misleading precisely because it camouflages the existence of a long and *continuous* history of written Indian literature. Lincoln's lack of attention to this early writing has become paradigmatic for many contemporary critics of American Indian literature, the majority of whose critical studies focus on works written after 1965. In fact, A. LaVonne Brown Ruoff claims in her foreword to the collection that *Early Native American Writing* is "the first